

a.) Amendment to the Claims

Claims 1-41 (Cancelled).

42. (Currently Amended) A method of producing a tablet which comprises (i) a granule containing an active substance, said granule bearing a coating film which enhances release in intestine or sustained release, and is destroyed when a molding material comprising said granule is compressed at tableting pressure greater than 1.3 ton/cm², (ii) a diluting agent and (iii) stearic acid or a stearic acid metal salt as a lubricant, comprising the steps of:

preparing a molding material by uniformly mixing said granule with the diluting agent, said molding material not containing any stearic acid or a stearic acid metal salt;

selecting a tableting machine comprising a die and a pair of punches in which stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt is applied only on surfaces of said die and said punches; and

operating said tableting machine to press said molding material and produce compressed tablets of said molding material at a tableting pressure of 0.7 to 1.3 ton/cm², wherein said stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt is provided only on a surface thereof and in an amount from 0.0001 to 0.2 weight percent per tablet.

43. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 42, wherein said stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt is applied to said die and pair of punches by the steps comprising:

housing said die and pair of punches in a spray chamber, and

spraying said stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt onto the surfaces of said die and pair of punches utilizing pulsating vibration air.

Claims 44-45 (Cancelled).

46. (Currently Amended) The method according to ~~any one of claims 42 to 45,~~ claim 42 or 43, wherein said diluting agent is granular.

Claims 47-52 (Cancelled).

53. (Currently Amended) A compressed lubricated tablet produced by the process according to ~~any one of claims 42-45~~ claim 42 or 43.

Claims 54-62 (Cancelled).

63. (Currently Amended) A method for maintaining a function of a compressed tablet which comprises (i) a granule containing an active substance, said granule bearing a coating film which enhances release in intestine or sustained release, and is destroyed when a molding material comprising said granule is compressed at tableting pressure greater than 1.3 ton/cm^2 , (ii) a diluting agent and (iii) stearic acid or a stearic acid metal salt as a lubricant, comprising the steps of:

preparing a molding material by uniformly mixing said granule with the diluting agent, said molding material not containing any stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt;

selecting a tableting machine comprising a die and a pair of punches in which said stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt is applied only on surfaces of said die and said punches; and

operating said tableting machine to press said molding material and produce compressed tablets of said molding material at a tableting pressure of 0.7 to 1.3 ton/cm^2 , wherein said stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt is provided only on a surface thereof and in an amount from 0.0001 to 0.2 weight percent per tablet.

Claims 64-71 (Cancelled).

72. (Previously Presented) The method according to either of claims 63 or 64, wherein said stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt is applied to said die and pair of punches by the steps comprising:

housing said die and pair of punches in a spray chamber, and

spraying said stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt onto the surfaces of said die and pair of punches utilizing pulsating vibration air.

73. (Previously Presented) A compressed lubricated tablet produced by the process according to claim 46.

Claims 74-79 (Cancelled).

80. (Currently Amended) A method of producing a tablet which comprises (i) a granule containing an active substance, said granule bearing a coating film which enhances release in intestine or sustained release, and is destroyed when a molding material comprising said granule is compressed at tableting pressure greater than 1.3 ton/cm², (ii) a diluting agent and (iii) stearic acid or a stearic acid metal salt as a lubricant, comprising the steps of:

preparing a molding material by uniformly mixing said granule with the diluting agent, said molding material not containing any stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt;

selecting a tableting machine comprising a die and a pair of punches in which said stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt is applied only on surfaces of said die and said punches; and

operating said tableting machine to press said molding material and produce compressed tablets of said molding material at tableting pressure from 0.7 to 1.3 ton/cm² without destroying said a coating film, wherein said stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt is provided only on a surface thereof and in an amount from 0.0001 to 0.2 weight percent per tablet.

81. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 80, wherein said stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt is applied to said die and pair of punches by the steps comprising:

housing said die and pair of punches in a spray chamber, and

spraying said stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt onto the surfaces of said die and pair of punches utilizing pulsating vibration air.

Claims 82-83 (Cancelled).

84. (Currently Amended) The method according to ~~any one of claims 80 to 83,~~ claim 80 or 81, wherein said diluting agent is granular.

Claims 85-90 (Cancelled).

91. (Currently Amended) A compressed lubricated tablet produced by the process according to ~~any one of claims 80 to 83~~ claim 80 or 81.

Claims 92-98 (Cancelled).

99. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 46, wherein said molding material comprises same amount of said granule and said diluting agent.

100. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 84, wherein said molding material comprises same amount of said granule and said diluting agent.

101. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 46, wherein said molding material is dry.

102. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 84, wherein said molding material is dry.